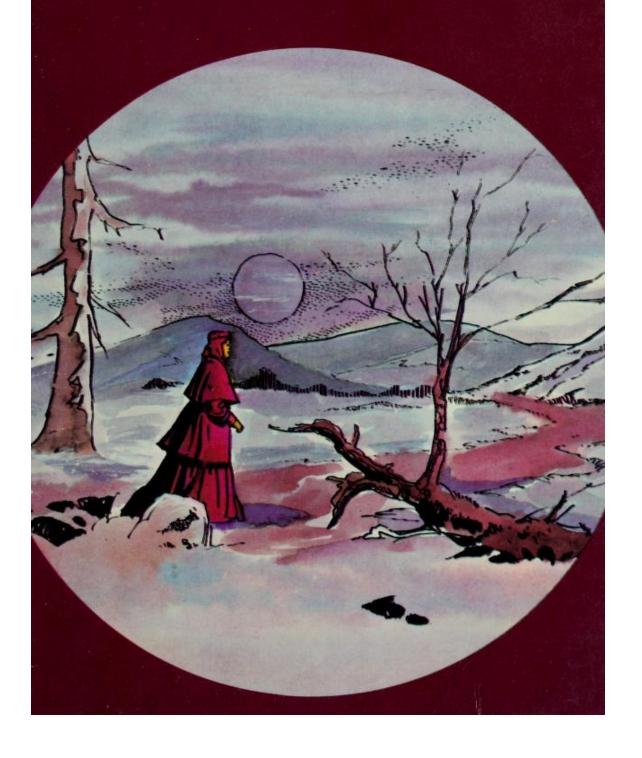
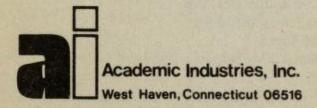
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CHARLOTTE BRONTE

Jane Eyre



Jane Eyre Charlotte Brontë



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about the author

Charlotte Brontë was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1816. Her father was a minister, and her mother was a frail woman who died when Charlotte was five.

Charlotte and three of her sisters were sent to a school nearby where conditions were so bad that two of them grew sick and died. Many believe that Charlotte used this school as a model for Lowood in *Jane Eyre*.

When her education was complete, Charlotte and her sister Emily planned to open a school for girls. But no one applied to the school, and the sisters were forced to give it up. Then a new idea occurred to them. Charlotte had been writing stories since she was a child; finally she decided to publish one. In 1847, under the pen name of Currer Bell, Charlotte's novel Jane Eyre was printed. It was an instant success.

Her financial worries were over, but Charlotte had other sufferings to endure. Her brother and her two sisters died within a short time, leaving her alone. Yet she managed to write two more novels, Shirley and Villette. Then in 1854 she married Arthur Bell Nicholls, her father's assistant minister.

Charlotte's happiness as an author and a wife, however, was cut short. After only a year of marriage, she died in 1855 at the age of thirty-nine.

Charlotte Brontë

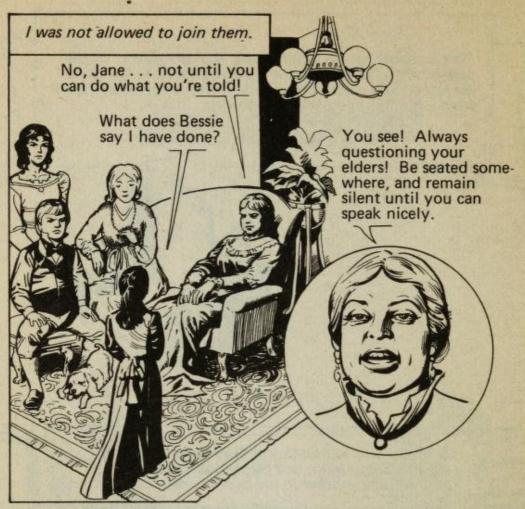
Jane Eyre

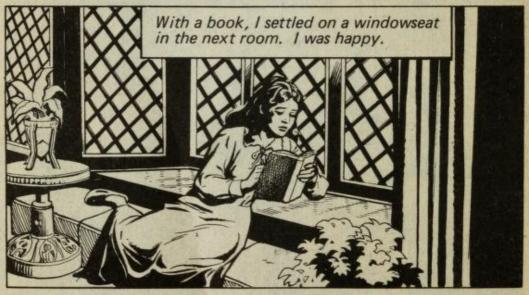


This is my story. As a child I was left an orphan in the care of my mother's brother. All was well until he died. He left a widow and three children who had room in their house, but not in their hearts, for me.







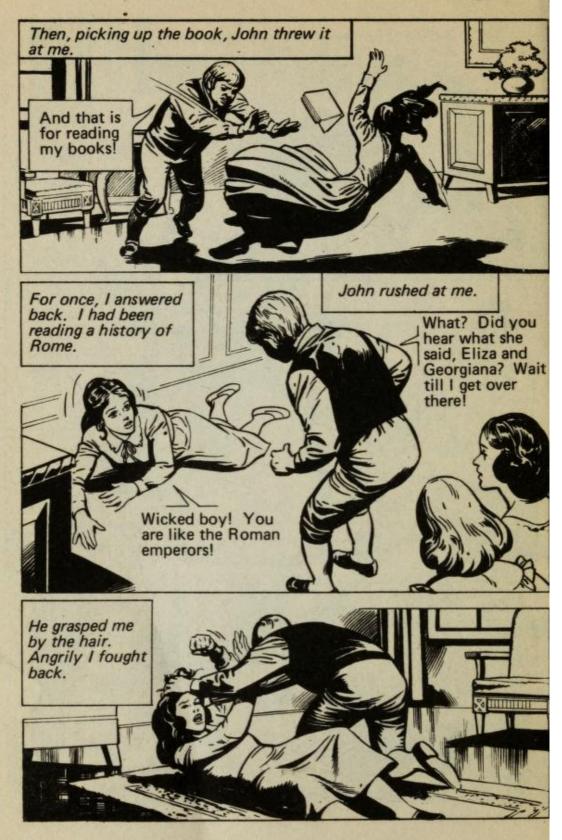


Jane Eyre







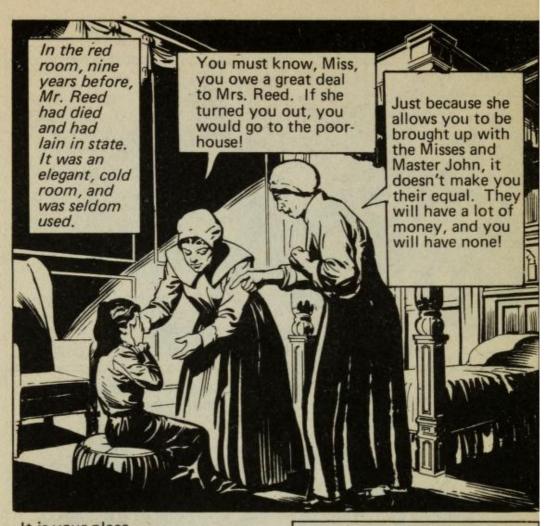


Mrs. Reed arrived, followed by her maid Abbot, and Bessie the nurse. We were quickly separated.

What a fury, to fly at Master see such a thing?









Say your prayers! If you aren't sorry, something bad might come down the chimney and take you away!



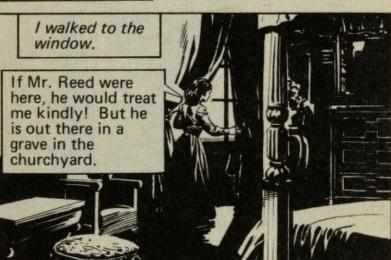
They left, locking the door. My head ached and bled. I sat trying to think.

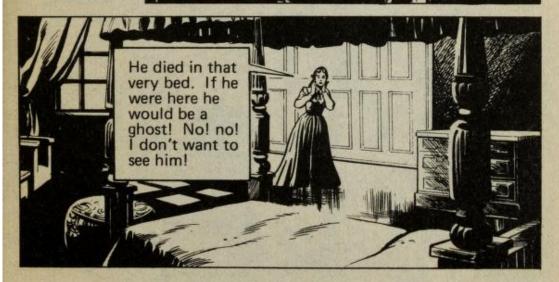
Eliza and
Georgiana are
selfish and
spoiled; John
is cruel to me
and to everyone! But they
are loved and
praised and
never punished!



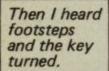


Mr. Reed had been my uncle, my mother's brother. When my parents died soon after my birth, he took me into his own home. And at his death, he had made Mrs. Reed promise to bring me up as one of her own children.









What dreadful noise!

Take me out! Let me go to my room!



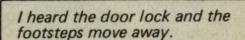




Jane Eyre



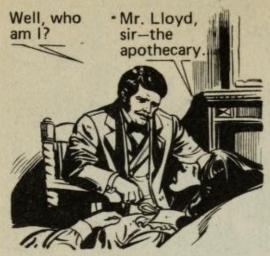






I fell to the floor in a faint.





She'll do very well now, See that she is not upset tonight. I will call again tomorrow.



Talking to me the next day, Mr.
Lloyd learned that I was very unhappy and would like to go to school. He told this to Mrs. Reed. Several weeks later I was brought to her in the drawing room.



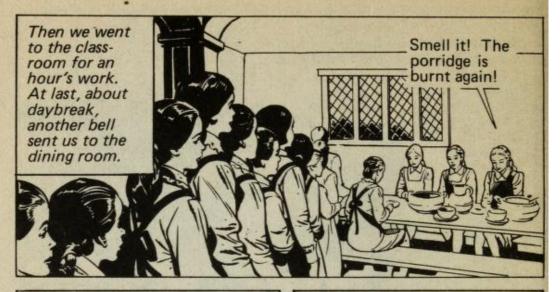


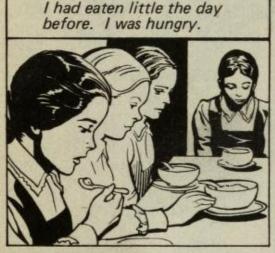


After travelling all day, I was tired when I arrived. I noticed little more than the long dormitory where we slept two in a bed.

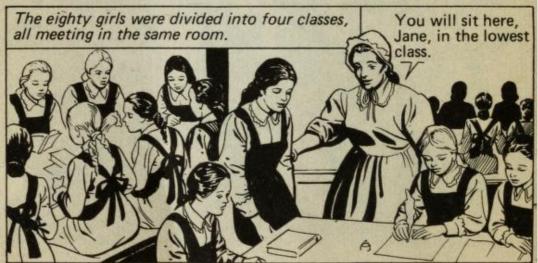
You will sleep here with me tonight.



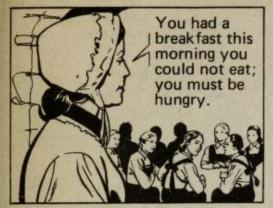








At noon Miss Temple, the principal, rose and spoke to us.



I have ordered that a lunch of bread and cheese be served to all.

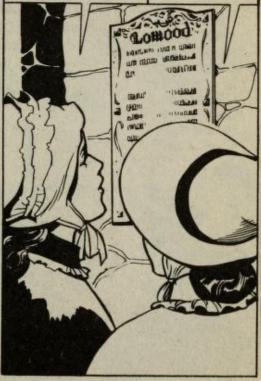


After this welcome lunch, we went to the garden for some exercise. Here I made a friend, Helen Burns.



"Lowood School, She was Mr. Rebuilt by Naomi Brocklehurst's mother. He Brocklehurst Hall." What does thing here. that mean?

runs every-





Why do all the girls look so much alike?

We make our own clothes—all from the same materials and the same patterns.

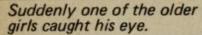
One afternoon Mr. Brocklehurst visited the school.

I find in settling the accounts that a lunch of bread and cheese has been served to the girls. How is this?

I ordered it, sir. Breakfast was so badly prepared that they could not eat it.

Madam, my plan is to make these girls hardy, patient, and humble! A little thing like burnt porridge should be allowed every now and then!







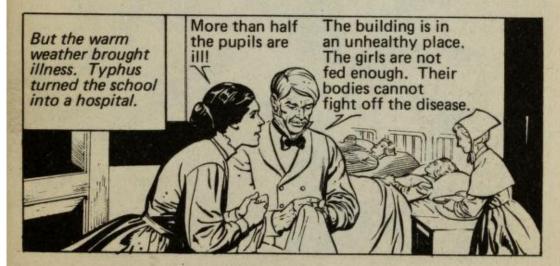
I wish the hair to be arranged plainly! That girl's hair must be cut short enough never to curl again!



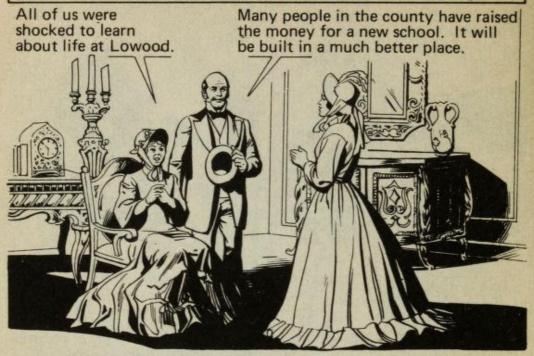
Mr. Brocklehurst
was a dreadful man.
I was very afraid of
him. But I worked
hard, learned my
lessons, and was
promoted to a
higher class. I began
to learn French and
drawing. I made
many friends. At
last I began to be
happy.

Spring came. It was warm, and the world blossomed.





Before the sickness had run its course, there were many deaths, among them Helen Burns. But some good came out of all our suffering.



E03



I am so thankful! Lowood can become a truly noble school!



And so it proved to be. I remained there for six years as a pupil, receiving a fine education. I stayed on for two more years as a teacher. And Miss Temple's friendship was always my greatest joy.

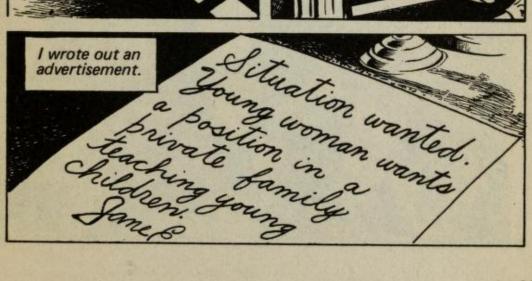
Then Miss Temple got married. I watched her, after the ceremony, step into the coach that would carry her away to a distant home.





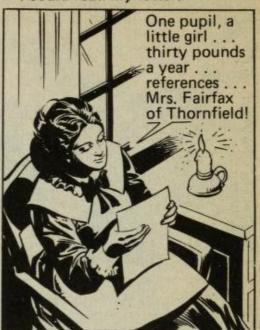
There is another world out there!
I want a new place, in a new
house, with new faces!







It was not until bedtime that I could read my letter.



I told the principal of my chance at a new job. She spoke to Mr. Brocklehurst, who said that Mrs. Reed, as my guardian, must agree.

Mrs. Reed writes that you may do as you wish. She long ago gave up any interest in your life.

I've neither seen nor heard from any of the Reeds since I came to Lowood. I was sure they would not care.



Soon I prepared to leave Lowood. My last evening arrived.



I went to the teachers' sitting-room. A woman took my hand.

I would have known you anywhere! And you've not quite forgotten me, I think, Miss Jane?

In another second I was kissing her.



Bessie told me her own news, and that of the Reeds.

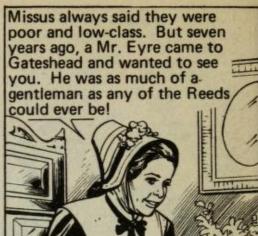
Did Mrs. Reed send you, Bessie? Oh, no! I've often wanted to see you. Then when I heard you were moving far away, I thought I would come and say



I am afraid you do not like what I have become, Bessie! No, Miss Jane. You are quite a lady, and ever so smart! You'll do well, even without your rich relatives!









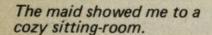


We talked of old times for an hour or more. Then Bessie left for home, and I went to bed. The next morning I mounted the coach which would take me to new duties and a new life.



After a sixteen-hour drive I reached my goal, a country house outside of Millcote.

So this is Thornfield Hall!



Come in, my dear! You must be cold. Mrs. Fairfax, I suppose?



Yes. Do sit down! I will order you a hot drink and something to eat!



I had expected to see someone very formal, but she treated me like a visitor. Mrs. Fairfax paid more attention to my comfort than I had ever before received!

After my late supper she led me upstairs through great, dark hallways to my bedroom.

This is the room next to mine. It is only a small apartment, but I thought you would prefer it to one of the front rooms,



The next morning I arose early. I found my way downstairs and stepped out through an open door to look at my new home.



It was here that Mrs. Fairfax found me.



Yes, a pretty place. But I fear it will run down, unless Mr. Rochester should decide to live here the year round.



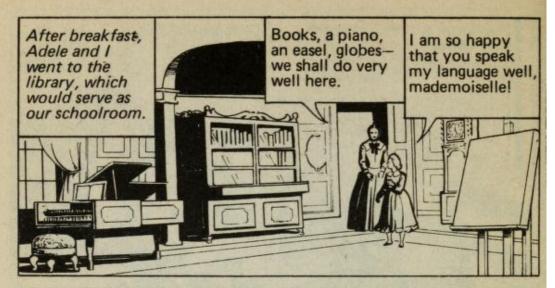


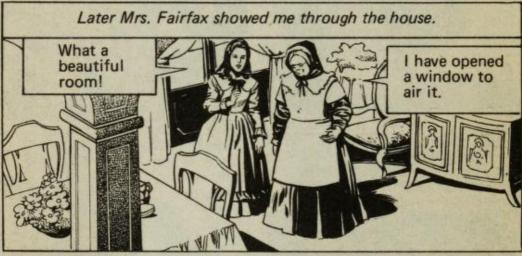


She is Adele Varens, a French child, Mr. Rochester's ward. Here she comes now, with her nurse.





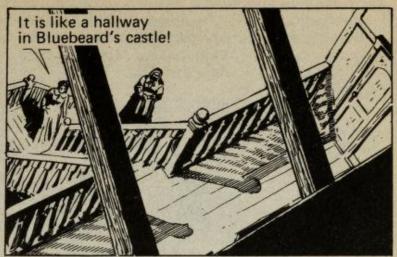








I followed her through many grand chambers, then through the attics and onto the roof for a fine view. Returning, I awaited her in an attic hall.



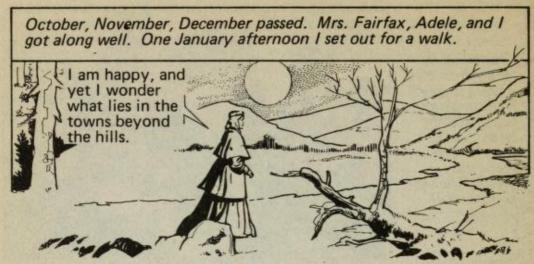






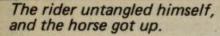
She is a servant who sews and helps with the housemaid's work.



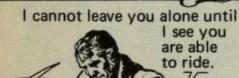




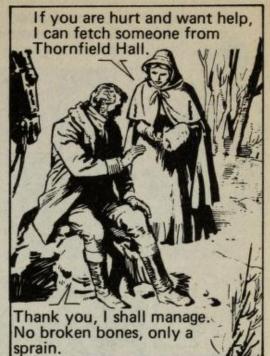






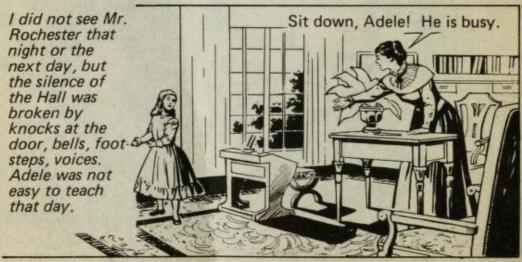


Very well, then . . . help me to my horse.

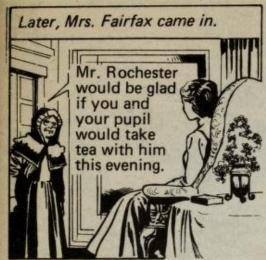




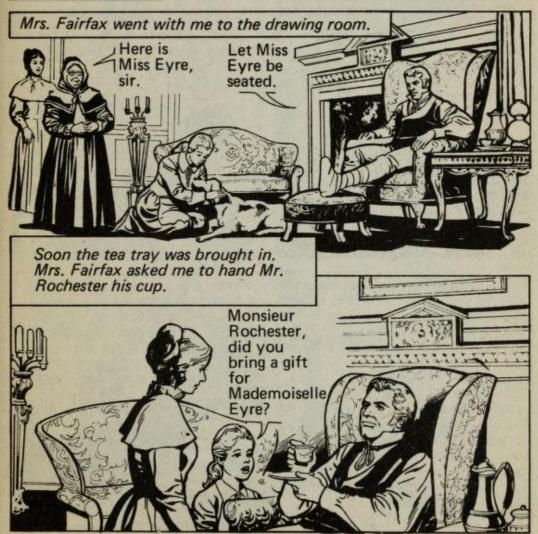




Jane Eyre













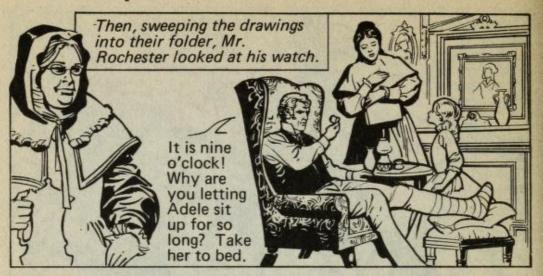


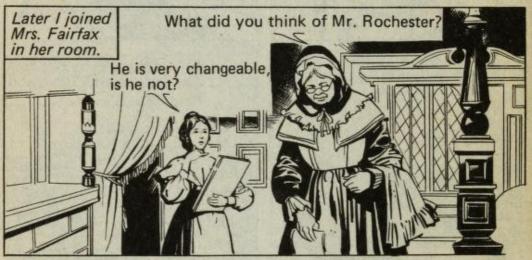








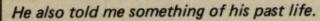


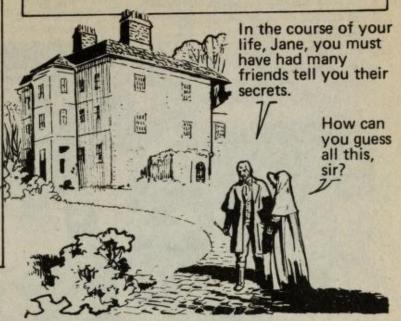






In the days that passed, I had other talks with Mr. Rochester. He liked to talk about the world and its beauties to people who had seen only a small part of it.





I know it. You listen with great understanding. I talk to you as freely as if I were writing in my diary.





That night I could not sleep. I kept thinking of his look when he spoke of staying at Thornfield.

Will he leave again soon? Mrs. Fairfax said he seldom stays longer than two weeks. He has been here eight weeks already . . .



If he goes . . . if he is absent . . . how sad the fine days of spring, summer, and fall will seem!

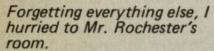


I put out my candle and lay down. I heard the clock strike two. Then there was a devilish laugh.











The smoke had made him groggy. I rushed for his basin and pitcher and emptied them onto the bed.



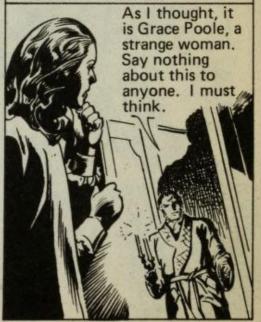




No! Wrap up in my cloak, sit there, and be still. I must pay a visit to the third floor.



I sat in the dark and thought of Grace Poole, whose laugh I had heard. Then Mr. Rochester returned.





I knew you would do me good; I saw it in your eyes when I first looked at you. My dear protector, good night!







Oh, yes. And one of them is Miss Blanche Ingram. She is a most beautiful woman, and is admired also for her great talents.





In three days—and bringing with him most of the fine people from the Eshton party. All the best bedrooms are to be prepared . . . everything cleaned . . . extra kitchen help hired . . .









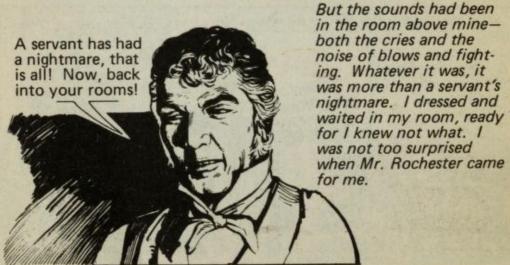




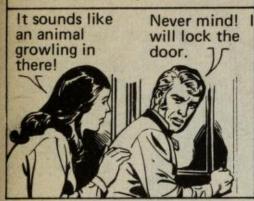








In a third floor room an inner door, usually covered by a curtain, stood open.



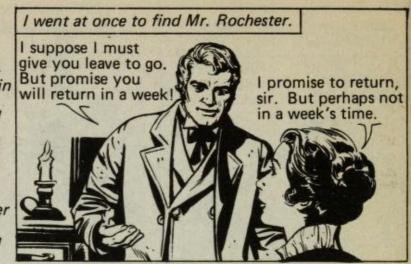




Mr. Rochester wanted Mason to be away before everyone woke up. We helped him down to a waiting carriage after the doctor had finished.

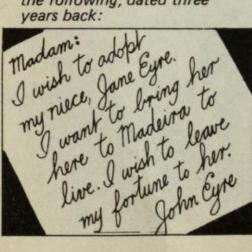


Only a short time later 1 received a message from Bessie at Gateshead. My cousin John Reed, having gambled away most of the family's fortune, had shot himself. The shock had given his mother a stroke, and she kept calling for Jane Eyre.





I obeyed her orders and read the following, dated three years back:



I could not bear to make you wealthy! I wrote him that Jane Eyre had died of typhus fever at Lowood. Now act as you please . . .



Mrs. Reed died that night. I had hoped to leave after the funeral, but stayed on to give my cousins what help I could. A month had passed before I reached Thornfield again.

It was a beautiful summer evening as I left the coach and walked across the fields. My heart beat faster as I saw a familiar figure.





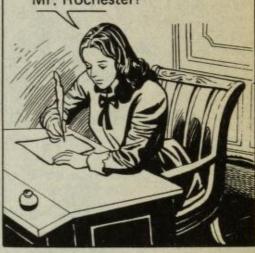






Suddenly I remembered the letter from my uncle. I would write to him at once.

I will tell my uncle that I am alive and going to be married. I would be happier if I could bring even a little money to Mr. Rochester!



The month passed. Then, two nights before my wedding, I dreamed that Thornfield Hall was in ruins.



I awoke, candlelight in my eyes, to see a strange woman staring at my wedding clothes. She took my veil, and threw it over her own head.



She took off the veil, tore it in two, and threw it on the floor.



Starting for the door, she stopped at my bedside and put her candle close to my face. For the second time in my life, I fainted from terror.



For our wedding there were no bridesmaids, no guests. Mr. Rochester and I walked the short distance to the church, and stood before the clergyman.

I charge you both . . . that if either knows any reason why ye may not be lawfully married, we now say so

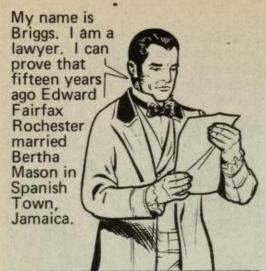


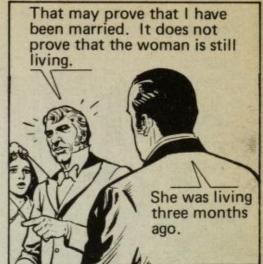
A voice spoke nearby.

The marriage cannot go on. There is a good reason.



What is it? Simply . . . that Mr. Rochester has a wife now living!

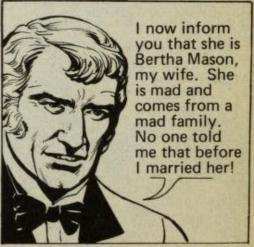






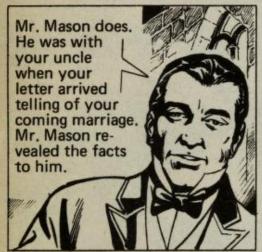


Enough! We can go no further. There has been gossip about the crazy woman kept at Thornfield under lock and key. She is Grace Poole's patient.









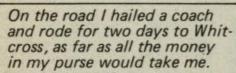


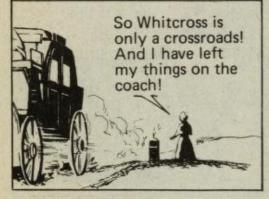
We returned to Thorn-field Hall. The coach, packed for our wedding trip, was unpacked, and the luggage was taken inside. I went to my room, changed from my wedding dress, and sat down to think.



There was only one answer. I must leave Thornfield Hall, for my dear Edward's sake as well as my own. I must slip away unseen, for if he begged me to stay, I would not be able to leave him.











I wandered here and there asking at other places with always the same answer. At sundown, I saw a farmer eating his supper.



At dark, I was outside the village. It began to rain.



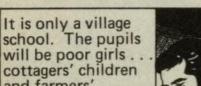




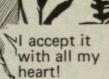
The Rivers
family: Diana,
Mary, their
brother St.
John, and the
old servant
Hannah fed me,
nursed me back
to health, and
became my
friends. St.
John promised
to find me work.



I am the minister at Moreton. When I arrived, it had no school. I opened one for boys; I mean now to open one for girls. The teacher will have a two-room cottage and thirty pounds a year.



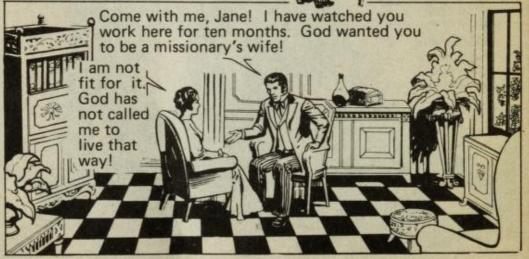
cottagers' children and farmers' daughters. Will you accept the job?



I moved into my little cottage and started the school. St. John often visited me and talked of his plans.

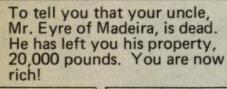


Long ago I vowed to become a missionary. My father was against it, but since his death I am free to go. I shall soon leave for the East.







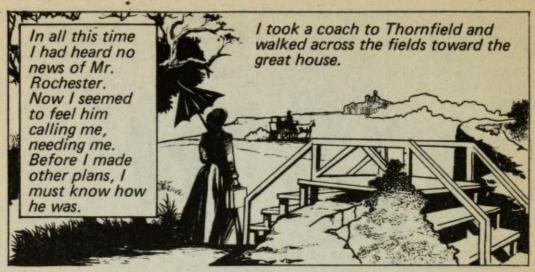


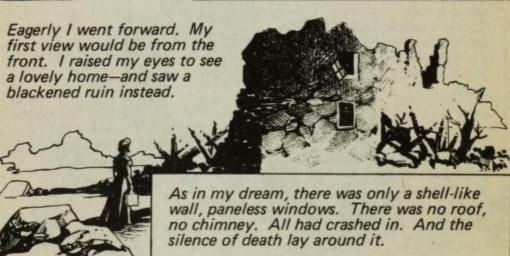






It was true. I was happy to have cousins whom I already loved. I arranged at once that the money should be divided among the four of us. Five thousand pounds was enough for each. Diana and Mary gave up their jobs, and we met for a happy reunion.





I rushed to the nearby inn. The landlord would answer my questions.

Is Mr. Rochester living at Thornfield Hall now?

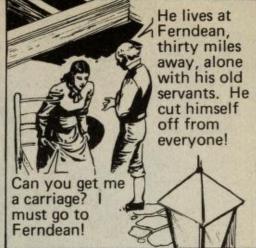


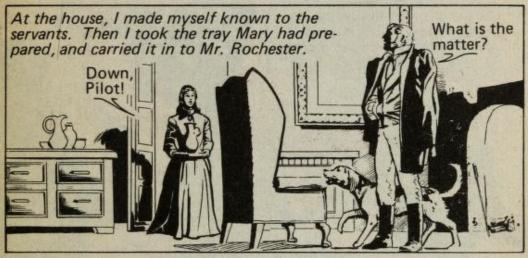
Oh, no, ma'am! Thornfield Hall is a ruin! It burnt down at harvest time. There was a lady kept in the house, a lunatic. She set the fire, then died in it, despite all Mr.
Rochester's efforts to rescue her.

And Mr. Rochester?















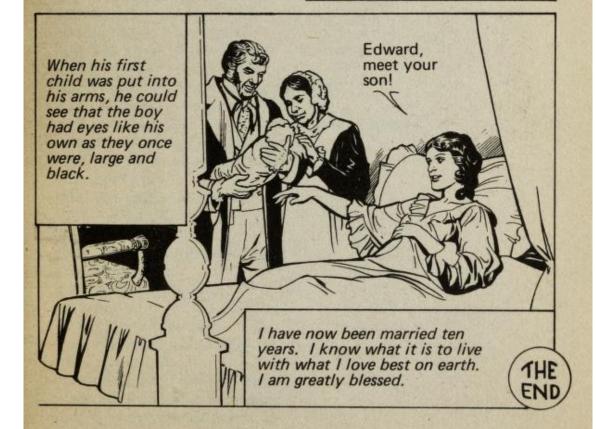
Two years later, as he dictated a letter, he came and bent over me.

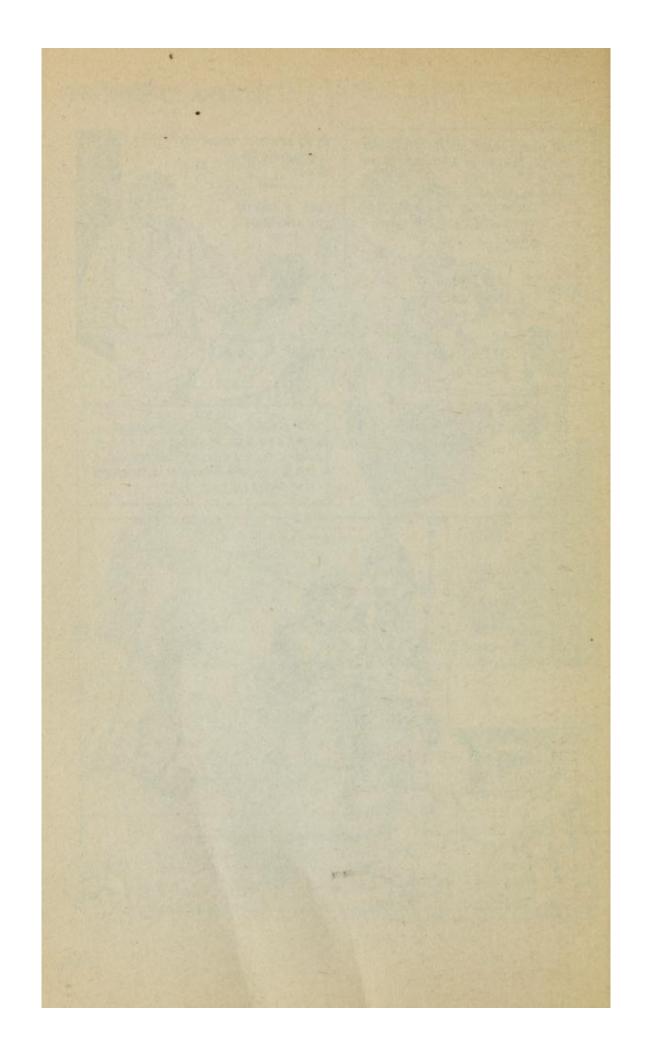
Jane, have you a shining ornament around your





He told me that he thought one eye was improving. We went to a London doctor at once. Soon Edward recovered the sight of that eye.





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Jane Eyre

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